

DDA 77-0956

23 FEB 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence

THRU : Legislative Counsel

FROM : John F. Blake
Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT : Request from House Armed Services
Committee to Store Records

1. Attached is a copy of a letter received from the Honorable Melvin Price, Chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services, in which he requests that CIA store records relating to the Committee's Watergate investigation. As stated, this material is both classified and unclassified, and I have been advised that it has been delivered to the Agency in five sealed records storage boxes.

STATIN 2. The Office of Legislative Counsel has advised us that the Committee feels that storage by the Agency would provide the best physical and procedural protection of this material, some of which relates to Agency activities and information. Prior to accepting the material for storage at our [] facility, I feel obliged to receive your specific authorization to do so. I believe there are certain risks involved which should be taken into consideration before such authorization is granted. The first of these risks is that since we are receiving only sealed boxes and are not knowledgeable of the contents, we may well be held responsible for "shortages," lost documents, etc., that may develop at some future date. You will recall that in the case of the Pike Committee such a problem did indeed develop. A second concern of mine relates to the Archivist of the United States. By charter the responsibility for storage and safekeeping of such materials is his, not ours. To an increasing degree, personnel of the National Archives and Records Service are working with us in various records matters and certain specially cleared personnel of that organization do have access to our records center. Should it become known to the Archivist that we were storing this material at least partly to keep it

out of normal channels, we could be subject to criticism and the resultant circumstances would probably negatively impact on our most cordial relationships with the Archivist.

3. For the reasons stated above, it is my recommendation that we advise Chairman Price that we regret we cannot accept the material for storage and that the five boxes in our possession be returned promptly to the House of Representatives.

/s/John F. Blake

John F. Blake

Attachment: a/s

RECOMMENDATION IN PARAGRAPH 3: APPROVED ()

DISAPPROVED ()

E. H. Knoche
Acting Director of Central Intelligence

Date

STATINTL/DA: [] ydc (18 Feb 77)

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

Exempt from Publicity
77-6357/A

OLC: 77-0532/a

22 FEB 1977

Honorable Melvin Price, Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The five boxes of Committee material, including Agency documents which the Agency provided, forwarded for our custody by your letter of 11 February 1977, have been received and will be stored in strict accordance with your instructions. Maximum security protection will be provided and no one will be permitted access unless authorized in writing by the Committee, action by the House of Representatives, or the Speaker of the House.

The three additional boxes of Committee material, which were picked up at the same time as the above material, have been scheduled for destruction in accordance with your separate instructions.

We are pleased to be of assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/ E. H. Knoche

E. H. Knoche
Acting Director

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February 11, 1977

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